

In the United States Court of Federal Claims
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS
No. 21-0676V

TRACY JEFFERIES,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: September 18, 2023

Catherine Costigan, Maglio, Christopher & Toale, Washington, DC, for Petitioner.

Andrew Henning, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

DECISION ON ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COSTS¹

On January 12, 2021, Tracy Jefferies filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*² (the "Vaccine Act"). Petitioner alleges that she suffered a shoulder injury related to vaccine administration as a result of a tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis vaccine that was administered on August 1, 2019. Petition, ECF No. 1. On April 17, 2023, I issued a decision awarding compensation to Petitioner based on the Respondent's proffer. ECF No. 44.

¹ Because this Decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action taken in this case, it must be made publicly accessible and will be posted on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, and/or at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/uscourts/national/cofc>, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2018) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). **This means the Decision will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all section references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2018).

Petitioner has now filed a motion for attorney's fees and costs, requesting an award of \$37,652.09 (representing \$ 36,438.50 for attorney's fees and \$ 1,213.59 for attorney's costs). Petitioner's Application for Attorney's Fees and Costs ("Motion") filed July 18, 2023, ECF No. 50. In accordance with General Order No. 9, Petitioner filed a signed statement indicating that Petitioner incurred no out-of-pocket expenses. ECF No. 42-4.

Respondent reacted to the motion on August 1, 2023, indicating that he is satisfied that the statutory requirements for an award of attorney's fees and costs are met in this case, but deferring resolution of the amount to be awarded to my discretion. Respondent's Response to Motion at 2-3, 3 n.2, ECF No. 51. Petitioner filed a reply on August 8, 2023, requesting an award of fees and costs as indicated in Petitioner's Motion. ECF No. 52.

Additionally, Petitioner has requested the following hourly rates for attorney Catherine W. Costigan: \$345 per hour for time billed in 2022 and \$370 per hour for time billed in 2023. ECF No. 50-5 at 2. I find these hourly rates to be reasonable and will award the attorney's fees requested. (And all time billed to the matter was also reasonably incurred). Furthermore, Petitioner has provided supporting documentation for all claimed costs (ECF No. 50-3), and Respondent offered no specific objection to the rates or amounts sought.

The Vaccine Act permits an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs for successful claimants. Section 15(e). Accordingly, I hereby GRANT Petitioner's Motion for attorney's fees and costs. I award a total of **\$37,652.09 (representing \$ 36,438.50 for attorney's fees and \$ 1,213.59 in costs) as a lump sum in the form of a check jointly payable to Petitioner and Petitioner's counsel. Per Petitioner's request the check is to be forwarded to Maglio Christopher and Toale Law, 1605 Main Street, Suite 710, Sarasota Florida 34236.** In the absence of a timely-filed motion for review (see Appendix B to the Rules of the Court), the Clerk of Court shall enter judgment in accordance with this Decision.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran
Brian H. Corcoran
Chief Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by filing a joint notice renouncing their right to seek review.